

**DESERT PUPFISH**  
**(*Cyprinodon macularius*)**

**STATUS:** Endangered (51 FR 10842, March 31, 1986) with critical habitat.

**SPECIES DESCRIPTION:** A small fish (5 cm (2 in) long) with a smoothly rounded body shape and narrow, vertical dark bars on the sides. Breeding males are blue on the tops and sides, and have yellow fins. Females and juveniles have tan to olive colored backs and silvery sides. Two subspecies are recognized: the desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius macularius*) and the Quitobaquito pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius eremus*), but may be recognized as separate species.

**HABITAT:** Found in shallow water of desert springs, small streams, and marshes below 1,515 m (5,000 ft) elevation. The species tolerates high salinities and high water temperatures.

**RANGE: Historic:** Once common in desert springs, marshes, backwaters, and tributaries of the Rio Sonoyta, San Pedro River, Santa Cruz River, lower Gila River, and lower Colorado River drainages in Arizona, California, and Mexico.

**Current:** Restricted to three natural populations in California and the non-natural irrigation drains around the Salton Sea. Also found in restricted locations in Sonora and Baja California, Mexico. One natural population still occurs in Quitobaquito Spring and Pond in Pima County and reintroductions have been made in Pima, Pinal, Maricopa, Graham, Cochise, La Paz, and Yavapai counties, Arizona. New introductions continue.

**REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY:** Impacts include the introduction and spread of exotic predatory and competitive fishes, water impoundment and diversion, water pollution, stream channelization, and habitat modification.

**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, the States of Arizona and California, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and private.

**NOTES:** Critical habitat includes Quitobaquito Spring and pond in Pima County, Arizona; and portions of San Felipe Creek, Carrizo Wash, and Fish Creek Wash in Imperial County, California.

A Recovery Plan was completed in September 1993.

A number of populations are maintained in captivity, including one at Dexter National Fish Hatchery in Dexter, New Mexico. Reintroductions are planned for the lower Gila and Colorado River drainages.

Listed as a Species of Special Concern by the State of Arizona.